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General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

107th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 9 July 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 107 (*continued*)

High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development

Draft resolution (A/56/L.81)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 95th plenary meeting, held on 11 March 2002, the Assembly decided to consider agenda item 107 directly in plenary meeting.

I give the floor to the representative of Mexico to introduce draft resolution A/56/L.81.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is particularly gratifying for the Mexican delegation to present for the consideration of the General Assembly draft resolution A/56/L.81, entitled "International Conference on Financing for Development", sponsored also by Venezuela, which in its capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, played a fundamental role in the final phase of the negotiations of the Monterrey Consensus; Denmark, which is currently President of the European Union; and Australia, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Japan, Macedonia, New Zealand, Norway, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States.

The Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development constitutes the culmination of an important historic process that places the fight against poverty at the centre of world development priorities and of the international community's concerns. It is also the crystallization of an immense effort, because the fight against poverty is being conducted under the leadership of the United Nations and with the energetic and resolute mobilization of the entire structure of the Organization.

With that concept in mind, the idea of holding a conference on financing for development had circulated in the General Assembly Hall for decades, and was a focus of attention for many of the fine minds that have preceded us. But it is at this point in history, in a combination of circumstances determined by the current interdependence and globalization, that our collective will has made it possible to build this process in order to move forward along new paths towards the pursuit of equitable and human development on a global scale.

It has taken many years of collective effort by the community of nations, along with the support and resolve of the Secretary-General and his team, to take this first step towards placing the issue of poverty at the centre of international cooperation, thereby breaking with the old inertia and opening up significant political spaces. The United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, in association with regional development banks, United Nations regional commissions and all other relevant actors — including parliamentarians, civil society and the private sector — will now be able to harmoniously promote the comprehensive agenda of financing for development that emerges from the Monterrey Consensus. However, it will be necessary to persevere

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and make further progress. This is the beginning. In moving forward with the vision of the Millennium Summit, the great collective challenge of Monterrey will be to transform our political platform into concrete, ambitious, effective and wide-scale activities. That should take place within a framework of joint international responsibility. In adopting the draft resolution before us today, we will be taking the first step both in that process and in the implementation of the commitments and agreements contained in the Monterrey Consensus.

Mr. Vallenilla (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for Venezuela to be a sponsor of the draft resolution contained in document A/56/L.81, entitled "International Conference on Financing for Development". Venezuela participated actively throughout the process that for many years cleared the way for the holding of The International Conference on Financing for Development which finally took place in Monterrey, Mexico, earlier this year. During the final stage, my delegation had the honour of playing an even more active role, when, as the representative of Mexico just mentioned, it took over from the Islamic Republic of Iran the chairmanship of the Group of 77.

This was a United Nations conference in which Member States, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, the business sector and civil society as a whole played an active role in the process that led to the Monterrey Consensus. My delegation believes that all the participants in the Conference can commend themselves on results that, while not meeting the highest aspirations of all, nevertheless represent a level of international commitment that has rarely been achieved in the past.

The report of the Conference, which we are endorsing today through this draft resolution, is the next step in a new process at the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization that will lead to the next phase, which is the beginning of the implementation by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council of the agreements reached at Monterrey.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): It is with great satisfaction that I take the floor on behalf of the European Union to join the Chairman of the Group of 77 in sponsoring daft resolution A56/L.81 endorsing the Monterrey consensus. We express our sincere gratitude to Mexico, the hospitable region of Nuevo León and the city of Monterrey, which all contributed to the success of the Monterrey Conference.

The European Union is committed to the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in order to achieve internationally agreed development goals and targets, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Development Goals are crucial in that context, and we believe that the Consensus represents an important step forward in reaching those Goals. Furthermore, we see the follow-up mechanism to this Conference as part of the strengthened, wider United Nations efforts in support of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, an integrated and coordinated follow-up to the United Nations conferences and summits. We look forward to an in-depth discussion at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly on how to strengthen the United Nations and on how to achieve coordinated conference follow-up. We also look forward to the contribution of the ongoing session of the Economic and Social Council in that respect.

The Secretary-General, in his capacity as the chief administrative officer of the Organization, will submit a report regarding measures taken to ensure sustained follow-up within the United Nations system to the agreements and commitments reached at the Conference, as well as regarding how to ensure effective Secretariat support within existing resources, pursuant to paragraph 72 of the Monterrey Consensus. That report will provide an important input in the ongoing United Nations reform process.

In pursuing those important goals, the European Union looks forward to continuing the constructive working relationship among all partners and stakeholders, a relationship and a spirit that so successfully paved the way for the results achieved in Monterrey.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/56/L.81. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Chen (Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services): I would like to inform members that should the General Assembly decide to adopt draft resolution A/56/L.81, by operative paragraphs 3 and 5 of the draft resolution respectively, the Assembly would endorse the Monterrey Consensus and request the Secretary-

General to include in his report to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development, as mandated in paragraph 3 of resolution 56/210 of 21 December 2001, measures taken, as well as his proposals, for ensuring effective Secretariat support in pursuit of paragraph 72 of the Monterrey Consensus, building on the innovative and participatory modalities and related coordination arrangements utilized in the preparations for the Conference.

While the endorsement of the Monterrey Consensus may entail financial and administrative implications, it is too early to provide a specific and detailed description of those implications at this stage. The details of those implications will be contained in the report which the Secretary-General will submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

To the extent that such implications would entail additional resources over and above the existing resources approved for the biennium 2002-2003, the activities to be funded from those additional resources would be carried out only on the condition that the General Assembly provides that those resources and/or extrabudgetary resources be made available.

The President: Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that since the introduction of draft resolution A/56/L.81, Andorra has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/56/L.81, entitled "International Conference on Financing for Development." May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/56/L.81?

Draft resolution A/56/L.81 was adopted (resolution 56/510).

The President: I now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution. Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of position, may I remind the delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba will join the consensus on this draft resolution on the International Conference on Financing for Development. However, Cuba considers that the document that resulted from that Conference reflects an imposed consensus, and that instead of commitments on financing for development, it simply includes interventionist charity, as was stated by President Fidel Castro.

The commitments and goals set in Monterrey fall well short of meeting the challenges and major problems that the developing world faces today. Instead of commitments for financing from developed countries, they simply added unfair and discriminatory conditionality. Monterrey did not even manage to achieve a concrete plan for the follow-up and implementation of the proposed objectives. Financing for development remains a large, unresolved issue on the international agenda.

In the preparatory process and in informal negotiations, the Cuban delegation firmly defended these positions. However, Cuba deferred to the Group of 77 out of unity — which is indispensable — and to enhance the negotiating position of the Venezuelan chairmanship. We heeded the urging and appeals from many developing countries, which were eager to have at the very least a document that, although with minimal scope and burdened with conditions, would make it possible to place financing for development on the international agenda.

In Monterrey, Cuba did not block the adoption of the document, request a vote on it, register formal reservations, or deliver a speech explaining its position. Cuba did not do so because this was not necessary, since the Cuban position was quite clear in the speech given by President Fidel Castro.

We must now try to take up once again the North-South dialogue with a view to proposing concrete actions and developing initiatives to continue fighting to change this unfair, exclusive and unsustainable economic order. To do this, we need optimism. But we must also have the necessary realism that would prevent the creation of the illusion that the so-called Monterrey Consensus has changed or replaced the exploitative Washington Consensus, or that in Monterrey we moved towards a more equitable international order.

Mr. Gopinathan (India): As we made clear earlier, certain domestic procedures were required to be completed before India could consider endorsing the outcome of the International Conference on Financing

for Development. The necessary domestic procedures have since been completed.

The forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, is an important conference where the international community will be required to demonstrate its political commitment to achieving the goal of sustainable development. India is firmly committed to working towards the success of the Johannesburg Summit.

In that context, we believe that it is important to endorse the outcomes of the major conferences held recently. It is with a view to maintaining the momentum for the Johannesburg Summit and for the implementation of the internationally agreed development targets, including the Millennium Development Goals, that India has joined in endorsing the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 107?

It was so decided.

Organization of the work of the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Chen (Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services): I would like to make an announcement concerning the general debate of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The initial list of speakers will be faxed to all missions tomorrow, 10 July.

I would like to remind representatives that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 56/468 of 1 May 2002, a voluntary 15-minute time limit should be observed during the general debate. The list of speakers was prepared on the basis of that 15-minute time limit. To help speakers in the general debate respect the time limit, a mechanism will be installed at the rostrum. Members may wish to take into account the time limit in their advice to their capitals with regard to drafting the statements.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr. Kamando (United Republic of Tanzania): My delegation would like to put a question to the Secretariat. We who are coming from our capitals expected the annotated agenda for the fifty-seventh session to be out by June. Up to now, we have not been able to secure a copy of that document. Can we get that document from the Secretariat?

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Chen (Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services): The provisional agenda of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly will be issued in July, and, on that basis, an annotated agenda will be forthcoming.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.